

Message Text

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FOR "A" ONLY, ATTENTION HOWE

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TAGS: OREP
SUBJECT: REPORT ON CODEL SMITH VISIT TO MOROCCO, JANUARY 14-17

REF: STATE 013754

1. CODEL SMITH VISIT TO MOROCCO AFFORDED MEMBERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW EMBASSY OPERATIONS AND SERVED AS A MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE AND CEREMONIAL OCCASION FOR INTERCHANGE BETWEEN THE U.S. CONGRESS AND THE NEW MOROCCAN PARLIAMENT. FOR ITS PART THE GOM WENT ALL OUT TO MAKE THE VISIT A SUCCESS, CLEARLY WELCOMING THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRESS TO THE U.S. LAWMAKERS THE RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT IN MOROCCO AND TO LEARN FROM THE AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIENCE.
 2. STAY IN MARRAKECH (JANUARY 14-15): THE FESTIVE AND HIGH-LEVEL WELCOME ON ARRIVAL BY PARLIAMENTARY VP LASKY, GOVERNOR TARIK AND OTHER OFFICIALS; INCLUDING 15 PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM THE MARRAKECH ARE A,
SET THE TONE FOR THE WHOLE VISIT. REPRESENTATIVE SMITH AND LASKY MADE ARRIVAL STATEMENTS (RABAT 0284). THE CODEL, WHICH AT THAT TIME ALSO INCLUDED CONGRESSMAN STOKES WHO HAD TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOURED FACILITIES FOR THE TRAINING OF YOUNG MOROCCANS IN ARTISANAL SKILLS AT THE MARRAKECH CENTER OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HANDICRAFTS AND VISITED HISTORIC SITES.
 3. A DINNER GIVEN BY MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HANDICRAFTS
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- GHARNIT (REGRETTABLY ABSENT AT THE LAST MINUTE BECAUSE OF ILLNESS) PROVIDED THE OCCASION FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL OFFICIALS. LASKY RAISED WITH MR. SMITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION VISITING THE U.S. MR. SMITH WELCOMED THE IDEA AND SAID HE WOULD DISCUSS IT FURTHER UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON.
4. STAY IN RABAT, JANUARY 15-18: SOON AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL IN THE

CAPITAL CITY OF RABAT THE CODEL WERE GUESTS OF HONOR AT A RECEPTION GIVEN BY AMBASSADOR AND MRS. ANDERSON AND ATTENDED BY MINISTERS, PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, THE PRESS, AND AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN. THE PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT PAID THE GROUP THE UNUSUAL HONOR OF ATTENDING A FUNCTION AT A FOREIGN EMBASSY. MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND OTHER OFFICIALS WERE PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO MEET THE CODEL MEMBERS AND THE FUNCTION WAS CHARACTERIZED BY A CONTINUOUS AND LIVELY INTERCHANGE BETWEEN BOTH GROUPS. A RECURRING THEME WAS MOROCCAN EAGERNESS TO HAVE MORE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS VISIT MOROCCO. SEVERAL PARLIAMENTARIAN, IN FACT, SPECIFICALLY

INVITED MEMBERS OF THE CODEL TO RETURN FOR A LONGER VISIT.

5. THE MORNING OF JANUARY 16 THE CODEL LAID A WREATH AT THE TOMB OF THE LATE KING, MOHAMMED V, VENERATED AS THE FATHER OF MODERN, INDEPENDENT MOROCCO. THIS COURTESY WAS WELL RECEIVED AND EXTENSIVELY COVERED IN THE NEWS MEDIA.

6. THE CODEL MET FOR ONE-AND-A-HALF HOURS WITH PRIME MINISTER AHMED OSMAN AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOUCETTA JOINTLY (RABAT 0360). THIS OPEN, GIVE-AND-TAKE OCCASION PROVED INFORMATIVE AND REWARDING TO BOTH SIDES. THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER WARMLY WELCOMED THE AMERICAN VISITORS. IN RESPONSE TO THE CODEL'S EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION AND REPRESENTATIVE SMITH'S HOPE FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECIPROCATATE MOROCCAN HOSPITALITY BY RECEIVING PARLIAMENTARIANS IN WASHINGTON, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO A VISIT BY A MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO THE U.S. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY CONGRESSMEN WYDLER AND BEVILL, UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PRIME MINISTER DESCRIBED MOROCCAN PLANS AND POLICY REGARDING EXTRACTION OF URANIUM FROM PHOSPHATES AND THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER TO MEET FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS. IN REPLY TO QUERIES BY REPRESENTATIVES ADDABBO AND WYDLER, THE CODEL WAS ALSO BRIEFED ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE SAHARA DISPUTE, AND ON MOROCCAN DEFENSE NEEDS AND POLICIES. THE MOROCCANS ALSO ANSWERED QUESTIONS FROM CONGRESSMEN MILLER AND ANDREWS REGARDING PRIORITIES FOR THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, WITH EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE. CONGRESSMAN SMITH COMMENTED AFTERWARDS TO THE PRESS ON THE OPENNESS OF THE FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS.

7. THE CODEL THEN PROCEEDED TO PARLIAMENT, WHERE THEY WERE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT DEY OULD SIDI BABA, HIS EIGHT VICE PRESIDENTS, THE PRESIDENTS OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEES, AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE BODY (RABAT 0365). AT THE OUTSET OF A TWO-HOUR MEETING, OULD SIDI BABA PAID A MOVING HOMAGE TO THE LATE SENATOR HUMPHREY AND WARMLY WELCOMED THE CODEL. HE WENT ON TO STRESS THE CLOSE AND LONGSTANDING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MOROCCO, AFFIRMED MOROCCO'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, AND GAVE A DETAILED AND ELOQUENT EXPOSITION OF MOROCCO'S POSITION ON THE SAHARA, PLACING THIS PROBLEM IN LARGER GEO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF EFFORTS TO DESTABILIZE THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA. HE ALSO INVITED

A CONGRESSIONAL VISIT TO THE SAHARA, AND CONCLUDED WITH THE HOPE THAT THE MOROCCAN PARLIAMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO DEVELOP ITS CONTACTS WITH THE CONGRESS SO THAT EACH SIDE COULD BENEFIT FROM THE OTHER'S EXPERIENCES. CONGRESSMAN SMITH THANKED OULD SIDI BABA FOR GIVING THE CODEL A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF MOROCCO'S CONCERNS, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO FUTURE EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MOROCCAN REPRESENTATIVE BODIES.

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN 0420 VICE 040

8. CONGRESSMEN, WIVES AND STAFF MEMBERS ATTENDED A SERIES OF SMALL LARGELY "IN HOUSE" LUNCHEONS GIVEN BY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE COUNTRY TEAM SHARING PARTICULAR PROFESSIONAL INTEREST WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES. (FOR EXAMPLE, CONGRESSMAN ANDRES WENT TO THE HOME OF AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE JERRY KUHLE, FOR A LUNCHEON ATTENDED INTER ALIA BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GREAT PLAINS WHEAT OFFICE IN CASABLANCA AND AN AID CONTRACTOR IN AGRICULTURE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.)

9. THE AFTERNOON WAS DEVOTED TO AN IN DEPTH BRIEFING BY THE AMBASSADOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNTRY TEAM, USING A QUESTION-AND-ANSWER FORMAT. THE CODEL SHOWED PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THE SAHARA SITUATION, AND THE DISPARITIES IN MILITARY EQUIPMENT BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. MESSRS. SMITH, ANDREWS AND O'BRIEN EXPLORED THE POSSIBILITIES FOR GREATER EMBASSY ASSISTANCE TO AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESS SALES IN MOROCCO. ALSO DISCUSSED WERE THE OUTLOOK FOR INCREASING THE NUMBERS OF MOROCCAN STUDENTS IN THE U.S. AND THE PROBLEMS FACED BY U.S. PERSONNEL IN MOROCCO IN SUCH FIELDS AS HOUSING

,
RECREATION AND THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE LOCAL SOCIETY.

10. THE SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF THE VISIT CLOSED WITH AN IMPRESSIVELY MOUNTED MOROCCAN-STYLE DINNER OFFERED IN HONOR OF THE CODEL BY PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDENT OULD SIDI BABA AND ATTENDED BY SIX MINISTERS OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE PARLIAMENTARY VICE PRESIDENTS, NUMEROUS MEMBERS

OF PARLIAMENT (INCLUDING THREE FROM THE SAHARAN AREAS), REPRESENTATIVES

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OF THE KING'S CABINET, AMBASSADOR AND MRS. ANDERSON AND OTHER MOROCCAN DIGNITARIES. A NUMBER OF PERSONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE CODEL WERE INCLUDED, SUCH AS THE LOCAL HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC RELIEF OFFICE, WHICH DISTRIBUTES MUCH OF THE P.L. 480 TITLE II COMMODITIES. AN EXCHANGE OF TOASTS CONCLUDED THE DINNER (RABAT 0327).

11. THE CODEL WAS SEEN OFF EARLY JANUARY 17 BY TWO VICE PRESIDENTS OF THE PARLIAMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES. CONGRESSMAN SMITH'S DEPARTURE STATEMENT WAS SENT IN RABAT 0327.

12. CABLES FOR USIA PUBLIC-AFFAIRS USE, USIAC CABLES RABAT 0299 AND 0324, WERE REPEATED TO DEPARTMENT.

13. ASSESSMENT OF VISIT: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THOSE OF US SERVING IN MOROCCO THE VISIT MARKED AN ENTIRELY POSITIVE LANDMARK IN OUR INCREASINGLY CLOSE AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH THIS KEY FRIEND IN THE ARAB AND AFRICAN WORLDS. IT UNDERLINED OUR SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO'S RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT AND COMPLEMENTED WELL THE EFFORTS OF THE USG TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS. AT THE SAME TIME IT EXPOSED THE MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARIANS TO COLLEAGUES FROM ANOTHER LAND WITH DIFFERING TRADITIONS TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF BOTH SIDES. THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THIS VISIT BY THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE VALUE IT PLACES ON THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND ON THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF ITS PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO BUILDING ON THE VALUABLE GROUNDWORK LAID BY THIS PRECURSOR OF WHAT WE HOPE WILL BE MORE FREQUENT DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MOROCCAN AND AMERICAN LEGISLATORS. ANDERSON

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